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for Castilians, with the Indies. The Casa de Contratación in its inception was designed, not to foster the traffic of private merchants, but to manage the trade of the crown, and a royal monopoly seems to have been contemplated like that of the Portuguese king with India. The evil features of the colonial system, as they became apparent in the time of Philip II., inhere in the dispositions of the Catholic kings themselves. The book is also wanting in the perspective which might have been gained from a closer acquaintance with the contemporary usages of other nations, especially in the commerce of the Mediterranean. There are few features of the organization of early American trade for which no precedents can be found in the regulations of the maritime cities of southern Europe, such as Amalfi, Pisa, and Venice.

The chapter on the history of privateering in Spanish-American seas is the least satisfactory. Artiñano, unaware of the terrible depredations of the French in the Caribbean in the time of Charles V., designates the expedition of Drake and Hawkins in 1567-1569 as the first piratical excursion into that region; and he persists in the antiquated Spanish notion that every foreign interloper in the Indies was a pirate. Barbadoes, St. Kitts, and the other Lesser Antilles were therefore settled by pirates (p. 195), and all the colonies of that era, save those of Spain and Portugal, were inspired solely by the thirst for plunder and the greed of gold (p. 39). Finally, it was the buccaneers alone who enabled the other maritime powers to maintain themselves in the West Indies and on the American coasts. Without them, Spain would probably have been able to repel these intrusions (p. 239). The writer's knowledge of the English and French colonies seems to have been gained almost entirely from Esquemeling.

These criticisms are ventured, not in a captious spirit, but in the consciousness that the author has intended only a rapid sketch of the greatness and decay of his country, as the text of his appeal for a rejuvenated Spain. His generalizations, except where vitiated by insufficient evidence, display thought and insight, and his comparison of Spanish colonial policy with the Navigation Acts of Cromwell is very apt. The spirited style, the excellent letter-press, and the absence of pedantry, should recommend the volume to a very wide public. Of the illustrations the frontispiece is most interesting, a photograph of a sixteenth-century painting which depicts the city and port of Seville.

C. H. HARING.

*The Danish West Indies under Company Rule, 1671-1754, with a Supplementary Chapter, 1755-1917.* By WALDEMAR WESTERGAARD, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History at Pomona College. With an Introduction by H. MORSE STEPHENS, Sather Professor of History at the University of California. (New York: Macmillan Company. 1917. Pp. xxiv, 359. \$3.00.)

IN spite of the inevitable lapse of interest in the history of the West

Indies which has been occasioned by the war, that history must nevertheless remain a subject of great historical importance. It must retain its importance from three facts: (1) The history of the commerce of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—an important and still unwritten story—can never be written with any finality till investigation has disclosed clearly and fully the economic development of the West India Islands; (2) The history of European expansion in those two centuries, more especially in its economic, social and institutional phases, can likewise never be completed without a very thorough knowledge of the economic life of the islands and of the social and political institutions which the colonizers from the various countries of Europe established in the American archipelago; (3) The history of the West Indies as a story in itself, by reason of the rapid development of Latin America and of the opening of the Panama Canal, will have an increasing importance and will inevitably call for the preparatory work of the historians to make the writing of such a history possible.

Measured in terms of the contributions which are made to these three important fields, Professor Westergaard's work more than justifies the years of research and the conscientious attention to every detail which he has given to the making of this book. From the point of view of the history of commerce he has made a contribution of high order in giving us the first story of the Danish West Indies. St. Thomas, as the refuge of freebooters and as an international port of free trade, had its influence on the European traders of all nations. It was a typical cosmopolitan trading centre where the prevailing tongue was Dutch, where daring filibusters like Captain Kidd sold their booty, and where international smugglers plied their trade. It was the "outlaw island". Then too his story of the slave-trade and especially of the part played in that trade by the Brandenburgers, who established themselves at St. Thomas, is an important contribution. From the standpoint of economic, social, and institutional history his contribution is no less important, for we get in his work a new and original story of the settlement of the Danes in the three islands of St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John. One is quite prepared to agree with the author when he says that "in the growth of the idea of self-government the experience of the Danish colonies is suggestive"—suggestive because it is corroborative of the studies of other scholars in their investigation of British, French, and Spanish West India colonies, which show that the spirit of independence and self-government were not characteristics of the British continental colonies alone. From the standpoint of the history of the West India islands it goes without saying that we have by his work another chapter which brings us one step nearer the completion of the fascinating story of the Islands.

The author shows a thorough knowledge of the historical literature dealing with the many phases of the history of the islands, the French,

the Dutch, the British, and the Spanish. But this knowledge is only supplementary to that wider knowledge which he has gained from his study of the original sources in the Danish archives. His long months of work in exploring the all-but-untouched treasures of the Danish colonial archives have yielded gratifying results. Professor Westergaard's method of work seems thoroughly convincing and in consonance with the best traditions of historical scholarship.

These facts make it hard to offer any unfavorable criticism of the work, and yet the conscientious reader of the book cannot but feel that the author has somewhat vitiated the excellent results of his study by paying too much attention to a great many details which confuse rather than clarify the story he is telling. Only superabundant enthusiasm could permit him to devote so much space to the lives of the governors of the Danish colonies. The godfather of the work, in attempting to set forth some of the commendable features of the book in the introduction, unwittingly reveals one of its weaknesses when he remarks that the author "has made quite a picture gallery of governors, factors, chaplains, statesmen, and politicians". This fault, if it is a fault, we feel sure, will be eliminated in Professor Westergaard's later volumes. The absorbing interest of the task will take him more and more into dealing with the forces which shaped the history of the West Indies, in which individuals are forgotten except as they play ephemeral rôles in shaping the course of that history.

The book is well written and contains a most readable and original story. It deserves a wide reading by all students of the history of colonization.

#### MINOR NOTICES

*The Heroic Legends of Denmark.* By Axel Olrik. Translated from the Danish and revised in collaboration with the author by Lee M. Hollander, Instructor in German and Scandinavian at the University of Wisconsin. [Scandinavian Monographs, vol. IV.] (New York, American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1919, pp. xviii, 530, \$5.00.) Among the many Scandinavian students who have explored the antiquities of the northern peoples, few take higher rank in constructive scholarship than the late Dr. Axel Olrik. Beginning some thirty years ago as collector and editor of Danish ballads, he worked his way backward through Saxo Grammaticus to the earlier fields of song and legend which he cultivated more effectively than any previous student of these materials. Dr. Olrik wrote on many themes, but his most important work is a critical history of the heroic legends of Denmark, a study in which he included such materials from the literatures of neighboring lands as deal with Danish themes. Two volumes of this work (*Danmarks Heltedigtning*) have been published; a third was in preparation at the time of the author's death, and will probably be published at an early date.